

IVY BAKER PRIEST

- i 1905 - 1975**
- i 30th treasurer of the United States**
- i 25th treasurer of California**

Ivy Baker Priest was born in Kimberly, Utah in 1905. While a small girl, she caught the eye of Congressman E. O. Leatherwood as she coached her brothers in a greased-pole climb. He said, “Smart girl you’ve got, Mrs. Baker. She ought to go into politics.” Her mother involved her in grass-roots politics at an early age.

When Ivy was a little older the family went through some hard times. She worked as a telephone operator and as a sales clerk to help out. She married Roy Priest in 1935 and they moved to Salt Lake City. Roy was a traveling salesman while Ivy enjoyed being a mother and housewife. Later she returned to the political arena.

In 1950 Ivy ran against Reva Beck Bosone for the congressional seat from Utah’s 1st District. She lost by 10,000 votes, but gained greatly in terms of name recognition. A few years later, Ivy went to the Republican National Convention in Chicago as the only Utah delegate not firmly committed to Taft. Eisenhower won and his campaign director called Ivy to direct the women’s division of the Republican National Committee.

Ivy was appointed the 30th treasurer of the United States. She worked diligently in that office during the two terms of the Eisenhower administration. She wrote speeches and preached the “Eisenhower doctrine” throughout the country. She outlined administrative objectives such as maintaining a sound and stable dollar, cutting expenses, reducing taxes and encouraging greater production while maintaining free markets. She advocated for the protection of savings and pensions of elderly Americans while preserving opportunities for younger citizens. Ivy was only the second woman to hold the office of United States Treasurer and she was the first Utah woman appointed to such a high-level position.

In April of 1959, Ivy was named national “Mother-In-Law of the Year”. That same year her husband died. She moved to California and remarried. In 1965 she announced plans to seek election as California State Treasurer and, after a year-long campaign, she won the office. She served eight years as the 25th treasurer of that state.

Ivy Baker Priest died in June 1975 leaving behind a lifetime of service. She is admired by many for her integrity and her great accomplishments.